

Headlines:

- **BRAC Survey on 11th General Polls: Job, Education, Transport –Three Issues for Voters**
- **A Ghost Survey Causes Concern**
- **Re-elect Awami League to continue Progress: PM**

Details:

BRAC Survey on 11th General Polls: Job, Education, Transport –Three Issues for Voters

Unemployment, problems in transport infrastructure, and crisis in the education sector are the top three issues that voters expect solutions from the political parties contesting the upcoming general polls, according to a survey conducted by BRAC - a Dhaka based International NGO. Nationwide 5,378 people from all 64 districts were surveyed in September- October using a semi-structured questionnaire. Issue like a free and fair election remain behind job, transport and education sectors in terms of voters' priority, the survey has found (Kalerkontho,18.12.2018).

The survey clearly shows that people are concerned with good governance that can ensure their well-being. And interestingly, this goes against the extra highlighted issues discussed in the media like Spirit of 71, freedom of speech, right to vote etc. Advocates of democracy contend that free and fair election is the most important issue for the county. They believe free and fair election will automatically ensure eligible rulers and good governance. But people seem to have no more confidence on this democratic system. They know, election will not make much difference in terms of ruling; with the current capitalist-democratic system only some agents of imperialist foreign powers will be elected either in the name of Mohajot or Oikkojot. Ultimately, they both represent the same foreign masters and not the people of this country. And if we examine the manifesto of these democratic political parties we find a bunch of false promises and rhetorical statements and there is no profound solution to the problems people are facing in their real life. In fact, these democratic leaders have miserably failed to sense the problems of our people. They are more concerned for their personal well-being and for the interests of their masters than that for the people of Bangladesh. Under the current political system, the same ruling class is managing the affairs of the people for decades and the result is same failures. Now, people should give a second thought to their problems and for the solutions they need to think out of the box. Problems are connected with the corrupt political system. Hence, electing new leaders while keeping the same system in place will not bring a real change at all.

A Ghost Survey Causes Concern

The Telecom regulator of Bangladesh has collected sensitive personal data of about 70 million cellphone users without their consent and shared those with another government agency for a "survey" just two weeks before the parliamentary election. Four mobile operators were at first reluctant to handover the information but at the end they submitted to the demand of BTRC in the breach of customers trust, industry sources have confirmed. In a

written communication with the regulator, operators also voiced their concerns about data security and other privacy risks, and warned BTRC that other government authorities can also demand the same information in future. (The Daily Star, 14 December 2018).

This is not at all surprising that governments, 'filled' with democratic and secular aspirations, can do such betrayal to its own people. We must recall that the prevailing 'World Order' under Capitalism is producing governments in our countries subjugated to their Western masters. The governing body of the country is only concerned about the interest of their masters not the people. They even do not have any feelings for the people and are not at all bothered about the commitments they make to the people while being elected or selected. This is a natural phenomenon that they will take every step for their own sake to retain or regain power. As the ruling system gives them the lawmaking power under the democratic structure, they can do whatever that suits them. So their manifesto to the people is nothing but public eyewash. The recent snatching of customer information by using state mechanism is just an example.

Puppet rulers are thieves and they sell the 'swag' to the West. No property of the Ummah is secured under their leadership and guardianship. People have seen enough since the birth of the country in these forty seven years. The upcoming election has given us "options" only by the West. So even a free and fair election can choose a Western puppet only.

Re-elect Awami League to continue Progress: PM

Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina urged the countrymen to re-elect the Awami League to keep up the country's development spree and serve the people again. She also sought vote from the countrymen to re-elect her government to celebrate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 2020 and the golden jubilee of the country's independence in 2021 with massive festivity (The Daily Star, 21/12/2018)

Hasina, who is infamous for her despotic regime, is urging the people to keep her in power for next term for continuation of progress and development. She is trying to conceal her phenomenal tyranny with these deceitful calls. Her regime introduced mass-scale enforced disappearance and institutionalized extrajudicial killing in Bangladesh to consolidate her authority over the country. A total of 275 people have been killed during incidents of 'gunfight' and 'crossfire' with law enforcers, in custody of law enforcement agencies, or being shot by law enforcers across the country between January 1 and June 30, 2018 [Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)].

On the other hand, the progress she is claiming is some infrastructure projects which were built for the purpose of development of transit connectivity for India. Some unnecessary iconic projects government is boasting for are/will be mostly used to loot people's money in the form of heavy taxation to pump into it. Moreover, major portion of the funds for these so-called developmental projects is drained to the evil nexus of ruling thugs and government officials. Thus these large development projects have less contribution to peoples' well-being and to improve the economic capacity of the country. Moreover, traffic jam has become the inevitable consequence of these so-called developmental projects that has turned our daily trips into nightmares. According to a World Bank report, in the last 10 years, the average traffic speed in Dhaka has dropped from 21 kilometers per hour (kmph) to 7 kmph, and by 2035, the speed might drop to 4kmph, which is slower than the walking speed. These are the glimpses of the progress Hasina made in last 10 years. The continuation of this 'progress' will surely worsen peoples' lives further.